

# NOTES FROM THE MEDICAL PRESS

IN CHARGE OF

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NERVOUS EXHAUSTION IN INFANTS.—The *Journal of the American Medical Association*, quoting from the *Archives of Pediatrics*, says: "Attention is called to this condition by Northrup, and a case is cited of a four-months baby suffering from nervous exhaustion, nervous dyspepsia, and prostration, the condition being cured finally by instituting rest treatment and by providing an intelligent nurse. The baby made a good start in life, but after a few months social demands began to wear on the mother and the milk suffered. In addition to all this was the incessant wear on the child's nerves by the noise made by trolley-cars and other street traffic and injudicious excitement, such as waking it from sleep, jumping it in the air, etc. Quiet surroundings were provided, the infant was fed in a dark room, all unnecessary noises were either muffled or reduced, and, above all, a wise nurse was given sole charge of the infant. The result was that in a fortnight the baby was feeding on maximum diet, sleeping perfectly, and gaining in weight. It has thrived ever since."

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COLD AIR IN PNEUMONIA.—Dr. W. P. Northrup reports a case in the *Medical Record* of pneumonia in a delicate little girl fourteen months old which he treated with open windows in December. The temperature of the room was at times 28° F. The child's temperature, 105°; pulse, 140 to 180; respiration, 40 to 60. He sums up his conclusions as follows:

"*How to Cure a Baby with Bronchopneumonia.*—1. Castor-oil to clear the field of operation. It is the first aid to the injured.

"2. Fresh air, cool and flowing. It reddens the blood, stimulates the heart, improves digestion, quiets restlessness, aids against toxemia. Regulate the temperature of the air in the room inversely to that of the child. The patient's feet must always be warm and the head cool.

"3. Water, plenty, inside and outside. Temperature of the water as indicated by child's temperature.

"4. Quiet and rest. Tranquillizing influences about patient. Undisturbed sleep.

"5. Correct the feedings to prevent fermentation and the formation of gas in the abdomen. If there is need, give high hot salines.

"6. Antipyretic: Water; no coal-tar products.

"7. Heart stimulants: Fresh air, hot foot-baths, relieving tympanites and crowding. Hot foot-baths and hot salines can be given in a cold room; both can be given under the bedclothes.

"8. Drugs: Whiskey and strychnine. These are the first drugs mentioned, unless that household remedy, castor-oil, be included. Promote general comfort in every rational way.

"*How to Kill a Baby with Pneumonia.*—Crib in far corner of room with canopy over it. Steam kettle; gas stove (leaky tubing); room at 80° F. Many gas-jets burning. Friends in the room, also the pug dog. Chest tightly enveloped in waistcoat poultice. If child's temperature is 105° F., make a poultice thick, hot, and tight. Blanket the windows, shut the doors. If these do not do it, give coal-tar antipyretics and wait."

Dr. Northrup says: "I asked the nurses what they thought of the fresh-air treatment for pneumonia, and they confessed that at first they were horrified, and thought they themselves would catch cold and get sick. To their relief they soon found that they endured their vigils much better, were fresher, and wider awake from having constant good air. They were truly delighted. They declared that my prognosis was fully justified and believed that the patient passed through with less exhaustion than any other they had ever known."

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THE SUCTION METHOD OF CLEANSING RAILWAY CARS.—*American Medicine* says: "An immense vacuum plant has been erected in the Jersey City yards of the Central Railroad of New Jersey for the purpose of cleansing cars of dust and disease germs. This road has seen fit to institute the vacuum system and for a distance of three thousand feet pipe has been laid, varying from two inches to five inches in diameter, covering a distance of about three miles. At various intervals the pipe is tapped and from these cocks flexible hose is run, which can be taken into a car either by the window or door. At the foot of the hose is a metal pipe with a flat triangular end, along the base of which is an opening through which the dust and dirt is drawn by a vacuum or dirt machine located in the central plant. The man handling the hose runs the slight openings over the cushions, curtains, wood-work, carpets, etc., and without noise or dust-raising every particle is quickly whisked away. Before reaching the central plant the dust must pass through two dust separators, the first of which clears the air of ninety per cent. of the dust and germs, the second separator or cylinder draws the air through a solution of corrosive sublimate, and complete disinfection is thus accomplished. It is estimated that by this apparatus two cars can now

be thoroughly cleaned at the same expense of time and money as was formerly required for one." When this method can be applied to cleaning homes a long step will have been taken towards solving the domestic problem.

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ADMINISTRATION OF OXYGEN GAS.—“At a meeting of the Chicago Medical Society,” says the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, “Dr. H. J. Burwash referred to a paper by Kellogg, of Battle Creek, Mich., entitled ‘Oxygen Gas Per Enema,’ which was published in 1887. In this paper Kellogg discusses at length experiments on guinea-pigs, showing that this gas per enemata is readily absorbed, and that dark, venous blood is noticed to be immediately changed into bright arterial blood by its application. He therefore recommends this method for the treatment of diseases of the liver and digestive organs. He reports many cases, nearly all being of digestive troubles. Dr. Burwash has made a new application of this method by using it in the treatment of the acute respiratory diseases, particularly pneumonia. He first used it in August, 1891, in a severe typhoid case, after failing to resuscitate the patient by the usual method of inhalation. The patient was a young girl, sixteen years of age, who became profoundly toxic, delirious, and cyanotic. The gas by inhalation did not appear to revive her from the stupor, and then it occurred to him to administer the gas per enema. He gave her one gallon; after two minutes’ duration the respiration became more exhilarated and the deep cyanosis disappeared. The patient recovered after a very protracted illness. Since that time he has continued to use oxygen per enema in all his critical cases, especially pneumonia. It is plainly apparent that the introduction of a large quantity of oxygen into the intestinal canal not only neutralizes and deodorizes the noxious gases that are frequently present there, but also introduces oxygen through the portal system to the liver, whose cells are not only stimulated to greater activity, but are nourished as well. Besides this, the already overcharged lungs are assisted in their function of aëration of the blood.”

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MENTHYL VALERIANATE.—The *New York and Philadelphia Medical Journal* says: “Menthyl valerianate has been found to be an excellent prophylactic against seasickness. K. Köpke, in a treatise on seasickness, recommends this preparation on the grounds that, though not absolutely infallible, it yet rarely fails to act. In the early stages of the sickness it is best taken in ten to fifteen drops on a lump of sugar. If this dose should not have the desired effect, it may be repeated after half an hour, with observation of the strictest diet.”